

SOKOL TIMES



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From the President's View

There is an old Slavic folk song where the refrain repeats over and over "How quickly passes the time!" It passes quickly indeed. Just this past week, I received news that the 17th All Sokol Slet or Worldwide Slet is scheduled to take place in Prague, Czech Republic from June 30 to July 5, 2024. Many tens of thousands of participants are expected to attend the All Sokol Slet. Our Sokol USA customarily sends members to participate in the Slet and many of our non-sport members travel to Prague as well to attend the Slet.

In Prague, there will be the traditional mass calisthenics and rhythmic gymnastics on the field. These events are truly impressive to witness in person and are very engaging for those who participate in them directly.

Over the next several months, more information will be circulated from Prague to the Sokols abroad including Sokol USA. You should watch the Sokol Times for more specific news as to what to expect. I have heard that a tour is being considered to be offered by someone affiliated with American Sokol organizations.

Many people travel to attend the Prague Slet to view the grand scale of the Sokol sports. Many visit Týrsuv Dum, which is the site of the Czech Sokol headquarters and where the founder of the Sokol Movement, Dr. Miroslav Tyrs, and generations of Czech Sokol leaders established their headquarters. There will be



Joseph Bielecki

many events of fellowship occurring at Týrsuv Dum. Additionally, there will be a very lengthy parade through the streets of Prague. There will be events at the Czech National Theater and there will be a variety of sporting events and sporting exhibitions at several of the athletics stadium venues throughout the city of Prague.

I encourage our members who are able to attend the Slet. It is truly an amazing experience to behold and in which to participate. It is also a very good way to see the Sokol heritage, both philosophical and sport, as well as for those who have their ancestral roots in Eastern Europe to travel and experience this region.

Additionally, one can meet many Sokols from countries all around the world and make new friendships or renew old friendships. It is a very interesting event and I encourage those who are able to take advantage of this opportunity to go and to experience the All Sokol Slet in 2024.

(Continued on Page 2)

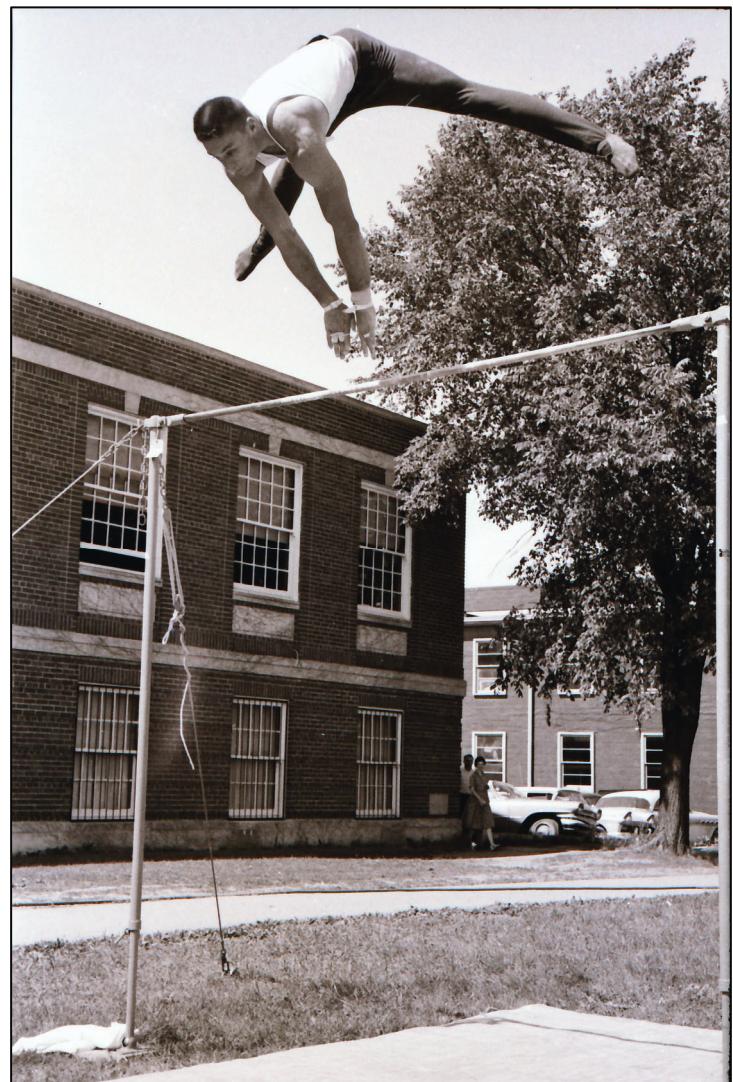
Milan Trnka: Sokol Champion

Milan Trnka, born March 2, 1933, in New York City to Pauline and Michael Trnka, succumbed to COVID-19 at Chester County Hospital in Pennsylvania on December 1, 2022. He was 89 years of age.

Milan began doing gymnastics as a child in the New York City Lodge of the Slovak Gymnastic Union Sokol, or Sokol USA. He competed in gymnastics all through his youth and teen years and attended a Sokol "Kurz" (Instructors School) at the Boonton Sokol Camp in 1948. He went on to become a National Sokol Champion and earned a gymnastic scholarship to Syracuse University. He graduated with a degree in Physical Education, specializing in teaching and coaching, and continued on to receive his Master's Degree at the University of Illinois.

During the 1950s, Milan taught at several Sokol camps and clinics including at Potters Lake in Wisconsin, New Kensington in Pennsylvania, and Boonton in New Jersey. In 1953, he competed on the Slovak Sokol (Sokol USA) team in national inter-Sokol competitions against Czech Sokol (American Sokol) teams.

While teaching and coaching at Niles Township High School in Skokie, Ill., he was recruited by West Chester State Teachers



Milan Trnka executes a high back uprise, dismount forward over the high bar. Note the canvas, horse-hair filled mat under the horizontal bar. These mats were less than 2 inches thick!

College in Pennsylvania to teach physical education classes and to coach the men's gymnastics team. He trained and mentored many excellent gymnasts through his 34-year career there, and retired from West Chester State in 1996. On request of the women's team coach, he sometimes assisted the women's team (which held its workouts in

(Continued on Page 3)

SOKOL TIMES

official organ of the
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SOKOL USA

A Division of **GBU** FINANCIAL LIFE



(Continued from Page 1) to a gym, whether it is a Sokol gym or a public gym, Spring is now arriving. The hyacinths and daffodils are approach to exercise. I poking up through the ground, the temperature is becoming warmer and soon everything will become green again. With that in mind, this is a good time to begin to work off the winter weight gain and the winter pounds.

One can do this by walking, stationary bike riding, chair aerobics, solitary exercises, or going

From the President's View

to a gym, whether it is a Sokol gym or a public gym, for a more professional approach to exercise. I encourage our members to read the healthy living tips that Sister Ellen Kovac often places in the Sokol Times as well as to view her chair aerobic videos that are available for all to watch on the Sokol USA website.

Now that Spring and Summer are approaching, I encourage our lodges and districts to be active both physically and fraternally. It

is important for our those who are less fortunate members to meet and and to make donations to gather and for our lodges to food banks or to participate hold meetings and engage in community food drives in their usual fraternal and other efforts.

Fraternalism as well as our supporting activities have always been important. Sister Nancy Shurina is rolling out a grant program to encourage fraternal activity. Small amounts of seed money will be available and I encourage our lodges to work with Sister Shurina to explore new fraternal activities.

As always, I encourage our members to remember

mothers and encourage our members to remember their mothers, living or deceased, and all the wonder things their mothers have done.

You need not worry about eating the chocolate Easter bunny or too many peeps, as they are calorie free for this year only in celebration of the upcoming Slet in Prague.

NAZDAR!
Joseph Bielecki
President, SOKOL USA

Procedure for filling the vacant Past Vice President position

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

With the resignation of our Past Vice President and per the National By-Laws:

ARTICLE V National Board

Section 2. Nomination by Petition. Any adult member in good standing can be nominated for a position on the National Board at least four (4) months prior to the Convention by submitting the following to the National Board:

a) A letter of nomination by an adult member in good standing for the proposed candidate stating the position for which the member would like to run. The candidate may self-nominate.

b) A letter authenticated by an officer of the proposed candidate's lodge verifying that they are a member in good standing.

c) The proposed candidate will include a brief biography including qualifications and a statement explaining why they would like to be a candidate.

Section 3. Vetting by the National Board.

a) The National Board will validate the proposed candidate's biographical submission and will notify the candidate of their findings. If validated, the member's biography and statement for election will be distributed to the delegates and lodges and the candidate's statement will be published in the Sokol Times.

b) Members verified to run for office must attend the Convention. If a member is not a convention delegate, the member will be responsible for his/her expenses.

c) The above procedure does not preclude nomination from the Convention floor. Any delegate to the Convention may be nominated from the floor for a National Board position. If a delegate is nominated for a position from the Convention floor, they must furnish a candidate statement and summary of qualifications to the President of the National Board by the beginning of the next Convention session so that it may be distributed to the Convention delegates.

Section 4. Between conventions, the National Board shall exercise all administrative and executive powers of the Convention necessary to conduct the business of Sokol U.S.A.

ARTICLE VI

Duties and Rights of National Board Officers

Section 5. In the case of resignation, suspension or death of the President, the Vice President shall succeed to the office of President. Vacancies in any other National Board office shall be filled by an election among the local lodges in meetings assembled from two or more candidates nominated by the National Board with the defeated candidate or candidates who received the next highest votes for these offices at the preceding convention having priority in the nomination to fill such vacancies. In the case of emergency, such vacancies may be filled temporarily by Executive Committee appointment and said temporary appointee shall act until a successor is elected as provided herein.

We will accept nominations and the voting will be by the delegates from the XXXVI Convention only.

Nazdar!
John Kennedy
National Fraternal Secretary, Sokol USA

Milan Trnka: Teacher and Mentor

(Continued from Page 1) became a popular destination for gymnasts from all parts of the Northeastern U.S. During those years, he often taught at the Eastern Area Sokol Training Sessions which would be held two or three times each year at the Boonton, N.J., Byram, Conn., or Bethlehem, Pa., Sokol Halls.

For some 17 summers, he directed Sokol Woodlands Gymnastics School, one of the first gymnastics summer camps in the United States, located in Barryville, N.Y. Under Milan's directorship, the Sokol Woodlands camp

years in the United States Army and continued in the National Guard, retiring after 20 years.

Milan married Pauline "Honey" Plesnik, who at the time of their marriage was the Gymnastics Directress of Sokol Lodge 12, Newark, N.J. When Milan was courting Honey, he would sometimes show up at Sokol Halls.

Milan also served two

(Continued on Page 7)

More photos on Page 7



Sokol Kurz 1959, Staff: Rog Kolok, Addie Darula, Joe Skapik, Honey Trnka, and Milan Trnka



Potters Lake Sokol Kurz 1961, Staff: Albert Walko, Steve Banjak, Rudy Bachna, Carol Sumka, Milan Trnka, and Ed Gombos



Milan Trnka caught with a friendly smile.



This shows Milan from a swing in support on the parallel bars, straddle cut with release and regrasp the bars.

Fit for Life

By Ellen Kovac

Here are summaries of several recent news items that I hope you will find interesting and enlightening.

CTE, or chronic traumatic encephalopathy, is a degenerative brain disease caused by concussion or similar head trauma. A major new study has confirmed that "CTE can result from repeated, seemingly minor blows to the head" as well as from an actual concussion. The study's lead author, Lee Goldstein of Boston University, has found that, in fact, for 20 percent of known cases of human CTE there is no record of a concussion at all.

What we should conclude from this is that it's important to avoid, as much as possible, sports and activities that often involve blows to the head. Football is near the top of such a list of potentially dangerous sports, but any sport involving quick movement and frequent falls could result in head trauma. Gymnastics certainly could be on that list because it necessarily includes not only fast motion but also inverting the body during these quick movements. Of course, with gymnastics, the element of participating in a competitive game is not a factor. In contrast, gymnastics develops muscular control as skills are learned. One of the first things gymnasts learn is to land on their feet!

Unfortunately, CTE currently can be definitively diagnosed only at autopsy. But symptoms such as memory loss, confusion, depression, or impulsivity may suggest that a head trauma has occurred. *Be careful with your head and the heads of others!!*

The Mediterranean Diet proves especially beneficial to yet another category of people - multiple sclerosis patients. MS is a chronic disease of the central nervous system which can affect different people in different ways. In a study being presented this month at the American Academy of Neurology's annual meeting, people with MS were found

to be less likely to develop problems with memory and thinking skills.

A Mediterranean diet is high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, and fish, with reliance on olive oil as the main source of fat. It includes very limited amounts of red meats. Also, well.

very few highly processed foods and baked goods are included.

"Catching" Obesity – The Mediterranean diet something to consciously avoid. Researchers studied over 1,500 military families across the United States. Now, it is recognized as having cognitive (thinking and memory) benefits as Astonishingly, they discovered that the people who had moved into

communities with high rates of obesity were more likely to become obese themselves. The lead author of the study, Ashlesha Datar of the University of Southern California, concluded that these communities featured more sedentary lifestyles as (Continued on Page 7)

80's Theme

Trivia

Night

Saturday, April 29

6pm to 9pm

\$10 per person or \$35 per table (Tables are teams of 5)

Bring your own food/Snacks - Cash Bar Only

Door Prizes - Split the Pot - Team prizes for trivia and best table theme

Sokol Community Center
4855 N. Elston Ave. Chicago, IL 60630

District MCT will hold its Annual Meeting

**April 30, 2023
1:30 P.M.
Sokol Lodge 255
55 Siberian Avenue
Leechburg, PA**

All Lodges should be represented.
Please RSVP by calling 724-261-6377.

A free luncheon will be held before the meeting. RSVP is needed! An informative meeting spent with a nice group of people. Please come and join us.

Sr. Nancy Shurina
MCT Recording Secretary

Springtime 2023

Spring has finally arrived as of March 20th this year. The weekend before, most of the country moved their clocks ahead by an hour to experience Daylight Savings Time. The six weeks of cold winter weather that has lingered about ever since that rodent, "ahem," groundhog, saw his shadow have finally come to an end. As the weather improves and the warmth of the sun is on the horizon again, it'll become much easier for us to be active. This is an excellent time to start a new

healthy activity and to try using the Optimity App to earn points toward gift cards. As always with any new project or activity, it's best for you to begin with small steps and check with your doctor if you have any significant health issues before getting started.

The first big holiday of the season coming up is Easter in early April when we celebrate with traditional ham, Easter cheese and delicious Easter bread. Next up will be Mother's Day on Sunday, May 14th. A heartfelt thank you to all mothers past and present as well as to all women who have filled that nurturing role in someone's life. Finally, the month of May will end with Memorial Day on May 29th. This holiday celebrates all our heroes who gave their lives serving and defending our country and its wonderful ideals, while also signaling the beginning of Summer.

Some upcoming scheduled events include the National Board Meeting running from March 31st and April 1st in Boonton, N.J. The District MCT annual meeting will be held on April 30th at Lodge 255, Leechburg, Pa. Farrell Lodge will hold its annual meeting on June 5th followed by their annual golf outing on June 10th, and ending the month with the celebration of Father's Day on June 18th.

As always, I'm looking to share information about all events held by our Lodges and Districts, and I have had a Lodge and District reach out for more information concerning the new Fraternal Projects Initiative. More to follow regarding that in the next edition of the Sokol Times.

NAZDAR
Sister Nancy Shurina

HEY SOKOL GOLFERS!
Save the date for the best GOSH DARN
Golf Scramble in Western Pennsylvania
Saturday June 10, 2023

**FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
SOKOL FARRELL, PA
FOUR PERSON OPEN
GOLF SCRABBLE**



SHENANGO LAKE GOLF CLUB: 99 Birchwood Dr., Transfer, PA 16154



DISCOUNT FOR SOKOL MEMBERS!

For more information, please visit our webpage at:
<http://www.sokolfarrell.org/home.html>

Bro. Tim Brandt, Chairman

**Minutes from the
National Board
Meeting held in
Chicago, Ill., will be
published in an
upcoming issue of
the Sokol Times.**

START THEIR DREAMS HERE

Youth 3 Pay Membership Life Insurance

START BUILDING A LIFETIME OF DREAMS IN 3 EASY PAYMENTS

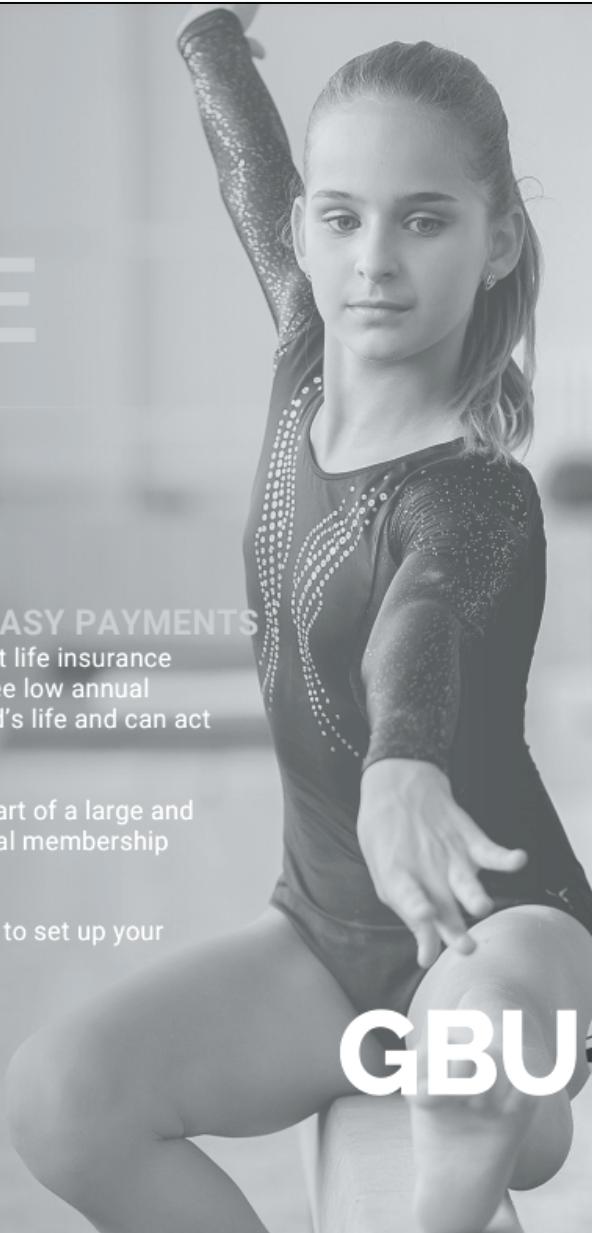
GBU's Youth 3 Pay Membership Life Insurance policy is permanent life insurance that offers a lifetime of coverage and financial growth for just three low annual payments. The policy will grow in cash value throughout your child's life and can act as a building block for future financial success.

Children become GBU members upon approval and will become part of a large and supportive community of fellow members with access to additional membership benefits.

Email sales@gbu.org or visit gbu.org to schedule an appointment to set up your simple Youth 3 Pay Membership policy.

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412-884-5100 800-765-4428
sales@gbu.org gbu.org

GBU-SOK-AV-1121



SHARE YOUR FAMILY EVENTS WITH YOUR "SOKOL FAMILY"

The Sokol Times Social Page is a great way to keep up with your old and new friends! Share your families' events with your Sokol family. We want to hear from you. Only news regarding members of our lodges will be printed.

Complete one of the attached forms and mail the information and a photograph of clear quality to Sokol USA, 408 Main Street, P.O. Box 677, Boonton, NJ 07005-0677 or info@SokolUSA.org.

ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS & ANNIVERSARIES



NAMES: _____

PHONE #: _____

HOMETOWN: _____

SOKOL LODGE: _____

YEARS MARRIED (IF APPLICABLE): _____

BIRTHDAYS



NAME: _____

BIRTH DATE: _____

AGE: _____

PHONE #: _____

HOMETOWN: _____

SOKOL LODGE: _____

PROMOTIONS, HONOR ROLLS & OTHER EVENTS



NAME: _____

PHONE #: _____

HOMETOWN: _____

SOKOL LODGE: _____

EVENT: _____

*Photographs are not required, but they do add to the presentation.
Please include a self addressed, stamped envelope if you would like your photograph returned.*



Boonton Sokol Kurz 1963, Staff: Victor Karabin, Milan Trnka, Albert Walko, Carol Cervenka, Barbara Babuska and Susy.



1962 Sokol Gymnastic team that traveled to Europe with the Vienna Gymnastic Team: Rudy Bachna, Diane Kurtz, Deloris Dunlavy, Barbara Babuska, Carol Cervenka, Mary Kadrik, John Bagel, Milan Trnka, Ed Zamecnik, Ed Gombos, Jim Mulvihill, "Dr. Podmajersky" (apologies for misspelled names).

FIT FOR LIFE

(Continued from Page 4)

well as more unhealthy eating habits.

It's important to resist the "social contagion" that plays a role in obesity. Don't eat because someone else is eating!

Ultra-processed foods, such as "convenience foods," frozen prepared foods, and ready-to-eat meals, *may increase your risk of developing cancer* – particularly ovarian or brain cancer, researchers say. Ultra-processed foods are those with more additives: artificial flavors, colors, sweeteners and preservatives. Examples include hot dogs, doughnuts, boxed macaroni & cheese, and flavored yogurts. According to an extensive study by the Imperial College London's School of Public Health, "consumption of ultra-processed foods is associated with a greater risk of cancer, especially ovarian and brain cancer."

Important conclusion: For your and your family's health, avoid ultra-processed "convenience" foods as much as possible! Need a quick snack? Eat fresh fruit!

MILAN TRNKA

(Continued from Page 3)

Lodge 12's Friday night workouts and assist in coaching, from which the Sokol Juniors class benefitted greatly!

Milan is also survived by his children, Michael Trnka (and his wife Kathy); Kim Annunziato (and her husband Mike); and his grandchildren, Conner, Kyle, Holly and John. A celebration of life was planned to be held in Milan's honor on April 2nd.

In his memory, contributions may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka KS 66675; St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis TN 38105, or to the Sokol USA Sport Fitness and Wellness Fund.

Written by Ellen Kovac, with research and input from Barbara Babuska and Honey Trnka.

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED

To the Milan Getting Scholarship Fund

From Nancy E. Hines, Sokol USA Lodge 12 \$100.00
In Memory of Brigid Ruvolo

From Sokol Lodge 248, Rossford, Ohio \$400.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. \$40.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Sokol Lodge 255, Leechburg, Pa. \$250.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Sokol USA Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. \$75.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

To the Sports, Fitness and Wellness Department

From Sokol Lodge 248, Rossford, Ohio \$400.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Lodge 79, Mahanoy City, Pa. \$40.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Sokol USA District Nitra \$20.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Emil Trgala, Sokol USA Lodge 12 \$100.00
In Memory of Milan Trnka

From Milan Kovac, Sokol USA Lodge 12 \$100.00
In Memory of Milan Trnka

From Sokol USA Lodge 276, Pittsburgh, Pa. \$200.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

From Sokol USA Lodge 15, Yonkers, N.Y. \$75.00
In Memory of Deceased Members

ANNOUNCEMENT

GBU Reporter submissions for the Summer edition (July 2023) are due no later than April 20, 2023 to Sokoltimesubmissions@gmail.com.



SAVE THE DATE!

American Sokol Instructors School

June 24 - July 2, 2023

Hosted by: Sokol Greater Cleveland
4939 Broadway Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44127

**Levels: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced,
Advanced II**

Minimum Age - 13



AMERICAN SOKOL INSTRUCTOR SCHOOL INFORMATION

To all American Sokol District Directors, Unit Directors, and Sokol Organizations:

The American Sokol Organization will be holding a National Instructors School this summer hosted by the Northeastern District. The school will run from June 24 to July 2, 2023, and will be held at Sokol Greater Cleveland. We hope you will take advantage of this excellent learning opportunity by sending interested students to the school.

Beginner: A minimum age of 13 years old. No experience required or attendance at previous schools.

Intermediate: A minimum age of 14 years old. Must have attended and passed a National Sokol beginner school with a score of 65 percent or have appropriate teaching experience.

Advanced: A minimum age of 15 years old. Must have attended and passed a National American Sokol Intermediate School with a score of 65 percent or have appropriate teaching experience.

Advanced II: A minimum age of 16 years old. Must have attended and passed a National American Sokol Advanced School with a score of 85 percent or have appropriate teaching experience.

SCHOOL FEES - All Students, All Levels

Postmarked by June 1, 2023 - \$400.00

Postmarked June 2-9, 2023 - \$50 Late Fee; Total \$450.00

Note: \$100 is Non-Refundable; All ages are as of August 1, 2023

Please send all application forms and fees to:

Sister Jane Wise, 5664 Dundeen Circle, Brooklyn Heights, OH 44131 by June 9, 2023.

Please make all checks payable to: American Sokol National Instructors School

Nazdar!

Brother Buddy Benak

School Director

Attention Sokol USA Directors

American Sokol is hosting a nine-day Instructor School. See the flier and information below. This program is part of a strong tradition of training instructors to provide high-quality Sokol programs for our members and local communities. We encourage you to send your eligible juniors and/or interested adults. There is a strong emphasis on safety and spotting, as well as the responsibilities associated with being an instructor.

Sokol Schools have produced many excellent instructors and Sokol leaders over the years. Most attendees develop lifelong friendships at Sokol School and have fond memories of their days at "Kurz" (school). Instructors School is one of the best ways to ensure that your lodge programs have sufficient instructors to continue your gymnastics programs. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity that is extended to us by our sister Sokol organization.

Money has been earmarked in the Sports Fitness and Wellness Budget to cover the School Fee for our members. Lodges who are interested in sending students should submit the application and fee as directed. Once your student(s) complete the course, you can submit a request to the Sokol USA National Directors for reimbursement. Be sure to submit everything by June 1st to avoid the late fee.

Nazdar,
Sokol USA National Directors

Application Link:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pgu6ynUzHk0VXII8IR-M4olfNQtNs3XB/view>

Application QR Code:



TAKING THE PLUNGE – Sokol Lodge 30 members Mike Fernand and Brian Reale dissipated in the polar plunge to raise money for the Special Olympics.